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BROMYARD RURAL DISTRICT
HEREFORDSHIRE



ANNUAL REPORT

on the

STATE of the PUBLIC HEALTH
for the Year
1950

Staff of the Public Health Department

Medical Officer of Health	...	...	M. J. PLEYDELL, M.C., M.D., D.P.H. (Terminated duties on 31st Oct., 1950) O. M. HOLDEN, G.M., M.D., M.B., D.P.H. (Acting Part-Time). (Appointed 13th Nov., 1950). L. N. GOULD, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.P.H. (Commenced duties on 29th Jan., 1951).
Clerk	G. PROSSER.
Sanitary Inspector	J. N. S. HARRISON, M.S.I.A., M.I.E.T. (Telephone No.: Bromyard 128)

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To the Chairman and Members of the Bromyard Rural District Council

MR. CHAIRMAN, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1950, which has been compiled in accordance with the Ministry of Health Circular 112/50.

It is pleasing to be able to record that 44 permanent houses were completed during the year and this satisfactory yearly total will help to ameliorate some of the most pressing housing problems. All of these houses were of the three bed-room type designed for a family unit. Attention will now have to be focused to the problem of housing the aged, preferably in bungalow type dwellings, plans for which are now under consideration.

TUBERCULOSIS. There were 12 new cases notified of which only two were transferred in from other districts. Although this rate is no higher than for the County generally, it is higher than I would like to see in a Rural area and an explanation for which I cannot find.

Infectious disease was most prevalent in the form of measles, the incidence occurring in the second quarter and probably connected with the concomitant outbreak in the Bromyard Urban District. Two cases of Poliomyelitis were notified in the 6-10 year age group and one case of Acute Encephalitis aged 13 months. The latter case died. There was a very low incidence of Scarlet Fever in the first and second quarters.

Diphtheria Immunisation statistics for the country show that over nine million children in England and Wales have now been immunised against diphtheria during the last 10 years. As a consequence, the annual deaths have been reduced from 2,800 to about 95 and cases from 55,000 to less than 2,000 for the country.

A drop of 27,000 immunisations during the first half of 1950 coupled with the observation that because of the vast reduction in diphtheria parents become less alive to the dangers of the disease, prove that renewed efforts must be made to sustain the campaign if valuable ground is not to be lost.

In conclusion, I am indebted to Mr. Harrison, your Sanitary Inspector, for his assistance.

L. N. GOULD,
Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.—STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA

Area (in acres)	...	...	...	...	...	...	61,114
Population	...	...	...	...	...	...	7,167
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1950) according to the Rate Books							2,115
Rateable Value	...	...	...	...	...		£17,936
Sum represented by a Penny Rate			...	...	...		£73 5 0

EXTRACT FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR:—

		Total	Male	Female
LIVE BIRTHS (Legitimate)	...	104	55	49
(Illegitimate)	...	7	4	3
TOTAL	...	111	59	52
		—	—	—
STILL BIRTHS (Legitimate)	...	4	3	1
(Illegitimate)	...	—	—	—
		—	—	—
TOTAL	...	4	3	1
DEATHS	...	100	51	49
DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES		3	—	3
DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE (Legitimate)	...	5	3	2
(Illegitimate)	...	—	—	—

COMPARABLE DATA FOR ENGLAND AND WALES, 1950:

Birth rate (per 1,000 of the estimated resident population)	...	...	15.5
Birth rate for England and Wales	...	...	15.8
Still Birth rate (per 1,000 of the estimated resident population)	...	...	0.56
Still Birth rate for England and Wales	...	...	0.37
Death rate (per 1,000 of the estimated resident population)	...	...	13.9
Death rate for England and Wales	...	...	11.6
Infant Mortality rate (per 1,000 live births)	...	...	45.0
Infant Mortality rate for England and Wales	...	...	29.8

SECTION B.—GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA

LABORATORY FACILITIES

Laboratory facilities are available at the County Public Health Laboratory. Since the end of the year the Laboratory has moved from the County Offices to new premises at the County Hospital, Hereford.

CLINICS

Under the County Council and Regional Hospital Board schemes the following Clinic facilities are available to residents in the district:—

Child Welfare Centre: On alternate Thursdays from 2 to 4 p.m. Since the end of the year, this Clinic has been moved from Frome Bank to the Church Hall, Bromyard.

Venereal Diseases: At the County Hospital, Hereford, on Wednesdays and Fridays.

The schemes also provide for Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics, Speech Therapy, Paediatric, Ear, Nose and Throat and Eye Clinics. Children are referred to these Clinics as and when required, on the recommendation of the School Medical or Infant Welfare Authority, or at the request of the Medical Practitioner.

I am indebted to Mr. J. N. S. Harrison, Sanitary Inspector to the Council, for the following statement (Section C to E) furnished under the Sanitary Officers (Outside London) Regulations.

SECTION C.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES AND INSPECTION

WATER SUPPLIES

Number and results of bacteriological and chemical examinations of water:—

(a) of raw water supply,

Bacteriological	—	Satisfactory	...	11
		Polluted	...	41
				—
		Total	...	52
				—

Chemical	...	Satisfactory	...	0
		Polluted	...	3
				—
		Total		3
				—

Total number of samples taken ... 55

(b) of water after chlorination ... Nil

(c) liability to plumbosolvency ... Nil

(d) action in respect of contamination. Informal notices were given to owners where water was found to be polluted.

Number of houses at which improvements to water supplies have been carried out ... 50

Number of houses with water available inside the house ... 738

Number of houses with water outside and,

(a) within 100 feet of the house	...	842
(b) between 100 feet and 100 yards	...	195
(c) over 100 yards from the house	...	396
		—
		1433

2,171

(d) number of new houses since January, 1950 ... 47

Total number of houses ... 2,218

The above figures are amendments to the 1941 Housing Survey report up to the 31st December, 1950.

There are no piped water supplies in the district, supplies are by private wells or springs with the exception of a few communal wells which the Council maintain.

The Public pump and well at Bringsty near the Police House has been overhauled and repaired.

The main Public well at Norton has been repaired and protected and a pipe line laid from it to a stand pipe on the road-side to give users better access to the water supply, at the same time a 300 gallon storage tank was provided.

No complaints of water shortage were reported during the year.

Three hundred and thirty-two visits were made for the purpose of investigating water supplies.

Very little progress has been made towards the supplying of water to the district by a comprehensive or district scheme.

During a pumping test of a well at Bishops Frome for housing purposes it was found that a yield of 1,600 gallons per hour was obtainable, being far in excess of the requirements of the housing site. The supply is being investigated as a district supply.

During the year the Council sunk one borewell for the Linton Housing Scheme. The test yield showed same to be at least 420 gallons per hour.

DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE

New drainage systems and treatment tanks have been approved at sixty premises including the new Council Houses at Evesbatch, Linton, Ullingswick and Stoke Lacy.

Number of visits made for the purpose of inspection of drainage was 93.

All new drains were tested by water pressure and were provided with all necessary traps, ventilators and inspection chambers. Water closets were provided in all cases where new drainage systems were installed.

The only sewer for which the Council are responsible other than Council House drainage systems is that serving a few premises in Bishops Frome. The outfall is combined with the road water drain on the Ledbury Road. This occasionally gives rise to complaints in warm weather. The Council have this ditch regularly cleared and are considering a scheme for the provision of a treatment tank.

Number of houses with water closets	...	...	489
Number of houses with chemical closets	...	...	153
Number of houses with pail closets	...	...	766
Number of houses with other types closets	...	...	810
			<hr/>
			2,218
Number of houses with no form of drainage	...		598

The above figures are amendments to the 1949 Housing Survey report up to the 31st December, 1950.

The increased number of Council House sewage treatment plants has given rise to a maintenance problem. The Council have this year employed a full time maintenance man and a large part of his time is taken up in the maintenance of the various treatment tanks.

FLOODING, RIVER AND STREAM POLLUTION

No complaints of flooding or pollution of rivers or streams have been received. The district is usually free from flooding.

REFUSE COLLECTION AND DISPOSAL

The Council are proposing to commence a scheme for collection of un-destructable refuse early in the new year. Several disused quarries have been offered to the Council for the disposal of refuse. The work will be done by contract.

PEST CONTROL ACT, 1949 and RODENT CONTROL

The Council have employed a full time maintenance and Pest Control Officer. His duties commenced in December; he has attended to two complaints.

DISINFECTION AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Number of houses disinfected:

(a) for bedbugs, fleas, etc.	...	...	...	Nil
(b) for Infectious Diseases	...	...	...	18
Number of Schools disinfected	...	...	...	2
Number of other premises disinfected	...	...	...	87
(including Hop-pickers' quarters, T.B. shelters)				

The preventative disinfection of the barracks, cookhouses, and latrines, etc., at all hop farms were carried out again this year to endeavour to combat fly nuisance. Preventative disinfection was also carried out at one boys' school annual camp.

One suspected case of Anthrax was notified; precautions were taken for the disposal of the carcase and advice given to the persons who had been in contact with the case.

There were three cases of Infantile Paralysis notified. One case was amongst hop pickers and this case was taken home to West Bromwich and admitted to hospital. The others were two local cases.

CAMPING SITES AND VAN DWELLINGS

Several applications have been received for the approval of use of caravans but the Council have refused them all.

Three camping sites are licenced at Cradley which are supplied with piped water and chemical closets.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

Table showing inspections carried out during the year:—

Inspections under			Number	Informal Notices served	Statutory Notices served	Notices Complied with
Housing Acts	...	...	1625	104	1	83
Public Health Acts	...	...	36	3	0	0
Cowsheds and Dairies	...	...	4	0	0	0
Factories and Workshops	...	...	11	3	0	0
Bakehouses	...	...	12	0	0	0
Hop-pickers' Quarters	...	...	241	74	0	70
Water Supplies	...	...	332	44	0	39
Infectious Diseases	...	...	79	3	0	3
Food Shops	...	...	15	0	0	0
Ice Cream	...	...	38	2	0	5

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS

PREMISES			Number on Register Inspections		Number of written Notices	Occupiers Prosecuted
1.—Factories in which Section 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	...	...	1	2	0	0
2.—Factories not included in 1, in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	...	...	2	9	3	0
3.—Other premises in which Sect. 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out- workers' premises	...	...	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	...	...	3	11	3	0

HOP PICKERS' LODGING ACCOMMODATION

Difficulties with the hop pickers and farmers were numerous this season caused chiefly by the weather conditions. The wet weather not only made the barracks into quagmires but also retarded considerably the picking with the result that most farms were very late completing picking.

The farms possessing hop picking machines progressed more favourably and I think that the condition experienced this season will have influenced several hop farmers into obtaining picking machines as soon as they are able. There are now five farms with machines in the district and as these are the bigger farms the number of pickers has been reduced.

Most of the complaints raised were concerning lack of refuse bins and dirty and defective closet accommodation. The cause of these complaints were mainly due to the carelessness of the picker and the type of picker rather than the farmer. Some efforts were made by the latter to make certain persons responsible for the condition of the farms and this helped considerably, both for the famers and ourselves.

At one farm it was found that additional barracks had been provided without the Council's knowledge or approval. They were of such a shoddy and unsatisfactory nature that I refused to allow the farmer to use them and they were accordingly closed.

This year the Ministry of Health's representative visited the district before occupation and he was able to see the quarters had generally been satisfactorily prepared and that the complaints arising during the previous years' visits were from the neglect of the pickers. The County Medical Officer, Dr. Cookson, also visited the district and appeared satisfied with the arrangements provided.

As in previous years my assistant was able to visit all farms and check on the latrine accommodation and to spray same with D.D.T. to combat fly nuisances. It was found that several farmers had made use of the Gamexene fumigators.

Total number of visits made for hop picking purposes was two hundred and forty-one.

Number of informal notices served	74
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New barracks and quarters have been provided at:—

Lower Hope, Ullingswick; Brook House Farm, Avenbury; Woottons Farm, Acton Beauchamp; Court Farm, Ullingswick; Rosemaund Farm, Felton.

The latter farm is an experimental farm owned by the Ministry of Agriculture.

Two new hop picking machines have been installed at New House Farm, Bishops Frome.

At one farm it was found that several families were continuing to occupy some of the barracks as late as December. Conditions were very serious and a report made to the Council with a view to Statutory action, but the owner of the farm managed to get the families to remove before Statutory action became necessary.

SECTION D.—HOUSING.

HOUSING

The Council now own 72 houses as follows:—

Heathfields, 2; Wolferlow, 2; Avenbury, 2; Cricks Green, 4; Much Cowarne, 4; Evesbatch, 4; Ullingswick, 4; Pencombe, 6; Linton, 8; Stoke Lacy, 10; Cradley, 26.

These include 44 new houses built by the Council during the year as follows:

Cradley, 22; Linton, 8; Stoke Lacy, 6; Evesbatch, 4; Ullingswick, 4.

A start has been made on eight houses at Whitbourne and six at Much Cowarne. Several further sites have been approved and are waiting the Contractors.

The Council have had to commence a maintenance service and have so far engaged one man full time on this work.

The water yield to the bore hole supplying Vinesend Council Houses was found to have diminished and was insufficient to supply the additional 22 houses erected at Cradley. The Council have agreed to sink a further bore but in the meantime the Fire Brigade are having to supply the reservoir serving these houses with water.

Number of Council Houses completed during the year:

Traditional	...	...	...	44
Non Traditional	...	...	...	0

Number of privately built houses during the year:

Traditional	...	...	...	3
Non traditional	...	...	...	0

Number of housing units provided by conversion of existing buildings completed during the year Nil

Number of inspections made during the year under the Public Health and Housing Acts	...	...	...	...	1625
Number of demolition orders made	...	...	...	...	0
Number of closing orders made	...	...	...	...	0
Number of Statutory Notices served	...	...	...	...	1
Number of undertakings obtained from owners not to re-let the premises on vacation by existing tenant	...	...	...	...	6

HOUSING ACT, 1949. Applications for grants by reconditioning existing houses.

Eight applications were received in respect of nine cottages:—

Number approved by Council	...	...	7
Number refused by Council	...	...	1
Number deferred by Council	...	...	1
Number of grants approved by Ministry of Health	...	...	0

SECTION E.

MILK SUPPLIES

Number of registered dealers' premises	...	...	...	...	1
Number of Tuberculin Tested retailer-bottler licences	...	...	...	...	1
Number of ordinary milk retailer/bottler licences	...	...	...	...	1
Number of visits to these premises	...	...	...	...	18
Number of samples taken	...	...	...	...	4

All schools in the area are provided with Pasteurized or Tuberculin Tested milk.

MEAT AND FOOD PREMISES

Number of inspections made	...	...	...	...	24
Number of informal notices served	...	...	...	...	5
Number complied with	...	...	...	...	5

ICE CREAM

The ice cream manufacturers' premises at Whitbourne have been closed down. As in previous years it was found that many outside ice cream purveyors visited the various hop yards in the district selling ice cream from various types of vehicles. Warnings were given where the persons concerned were found and the Authority from whence the purveyors came were notified of the infringement.

Number of inspections made 51

OTHER FOODS

No food Stuffs were condemned during the year.

One snack bar catering licence was approved for Fir Tree Inn, Much Cowarne.

SLAUGHTER OF ANIMALS ACT

Number of slaughtermans' licences issued 1
Number of licenced slaughtermen on the register 9

During the year the Society for the Humane slaughtering of animals issued a Cash Captive Bolt Humane Killer to me for loan for the humane slaughter of cottagers' pigs, etc.

SECTION F.—PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL NOTIFIED CASES, ACCORDING TO AGE

DISEASE		AGE OF PATIENT														
		0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-10	10-15	15-20	20-30	30-40	Over 40	Unknown	Total
Scarlet Fever	...	—	—	—	—	5	2	2	2	6	—	—	—	—	—	20
Whooping Cough	...	—	2	—	—	—	3	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	11
Acute Poliomyelitis (Non Paralytic)	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Measles	...	1	10	12	15	14	20	14	16	12	1	4	4	2	—	125
Pneumonia	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	2	3	—	—	—	—	8
Acute Encephalitis (Infective)	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Erysipelas	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	2	—	3
Food Poisoning	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The following figures are presented through information supplied by the County Medical Officer.

Number of children at 31st December, 1950 who had completed a course of Immunisation at any time before that date (i.e. at any time since 1st January, 1936).

Age at 31. 12 50	Under 1	1	2	3	4	5-9	10-14	15	Estimated Mid-Year child population, 1950		
									Under 5	5-14	Total
i.e. Born 1950 in year		49	48	47	46	41-45	36-40				
—	37	76	88	85	501	436	1223	646	1130	1776	

These figures indicate that 44.3% of the child population under five years of age has been immunised against diphtheria as compared with 44.7% at the end of 1949. 82.9% of the child population of 5-14 years has been immunised against diphtheria as compared with 78% at the end of the previous year. To sum up 68.9% of the children under 15 years of age has been immunised compared with 65.7% for the year ending 31st December, 1949.

TUBERCULOSIS

At the end of 1950, the Tuberculosis Register contained the names of twenty-three males and twelve females who normally reside within the district.

During the year, twelve new cases were notified, eight on account of Pulmonary Tuberculosis and four because of the presence of the disease in parts of the body other than the lungs.

During the same period, four deaths of persons suffering from Tuberculosis occurred, four left the district, and one recovered.

The following figures give a comparison of the number of persons suffering from Tuberculosis in each of the Local Authority districts in Northern Herefordshire:—

			Prevalence of Tuberculosis per 1,000 of the estimated resident population.
Bromyard Urban	...	...	7.3
Bromyard Rural	...	...	4.9
Kington Urban	...	...	9.6
Kington Rural	...	...	9.1
Leominster Borough	...	...	7.0
Leominster & Wigmore Rural	...	...	7.0
Weobley Rural	...	...	10.1

CAUSES OF DEATH (all ages)

			Males	Females	Total
1.—Tuberculosis, respiratory	...		2	—	2
2. Tuberculosis, other	...	...	—	—	—
3. Syphilitic disease	...	...	—	—	—
4. Diphtheria	...	...	—	—	—
5. Whooping Cough	...	...	—	—	—
6. Meningococcal infections	...		—	—	—
7. Acute poliomyelitis	...	...	—	—	—
8. Measles	...	...	—	—	—
9. Other infective and parasitic diseases			—	—	—
10. Malignant neoplasm, stomach	...		1	—	1
11. Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus			2	1	3
12. Malignant neoplasm, breast	...		—	4	4
13. Malignant neoplasm, uterus	...		—	—	—
14. Other malignant & lymphatic neoplasms	...		4	6	10
15. Leukaemia, aleukaemia	...	...	1	—	1
16. Diabetes	...	...	1	—	1
17.—Vascular lesions of nervous system	..		5	2	7
18. Coronary disease, angina	...		3	2	5
19. Hypertension with heart disease	...		3	2	5
20. Other heart disease	...	...	12	14	26
21. Other circulatory disease	...		1	1	2
22. Influenza	...	...	—	—	—
23. Pneumonia	...	...	1	3	4
24. Bronchitis	...	...	4	—	4
25. Other diseases of respiratory system			—	—	—
26. Ulcer of stomach and duodenum	...		—	—	—
27. Gastritis, enteritis and diarrhoea	...		—	1	1
28. Nephritis and Nephrosis	...	...	1	—	1
29. Hyperplasia of prostate	...	...	1	—	1
30. Pregnancy, childbirth, abortion	...		—	3	3
31. Congenital malformations	...		1	—	1
32. Other defined and ill-defined diseases			7	7	14
33. Motor vehicle accidents	...		1	1	2
34. All other accidents	...	...	—	2	2
35. Suicide	...	...	—	—	—
36. Homicide and operations of war	...		—	—	—
All causes					100